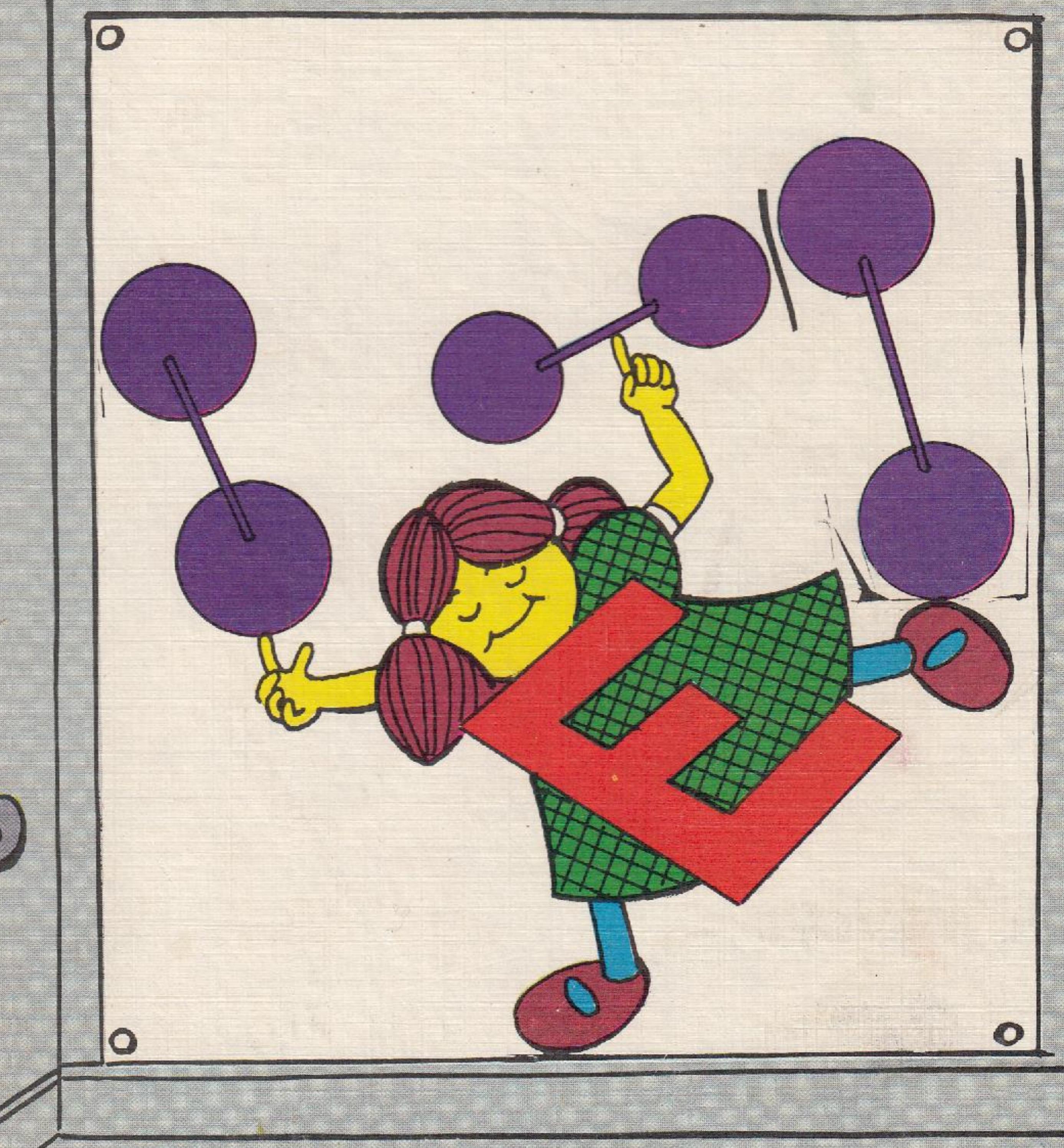
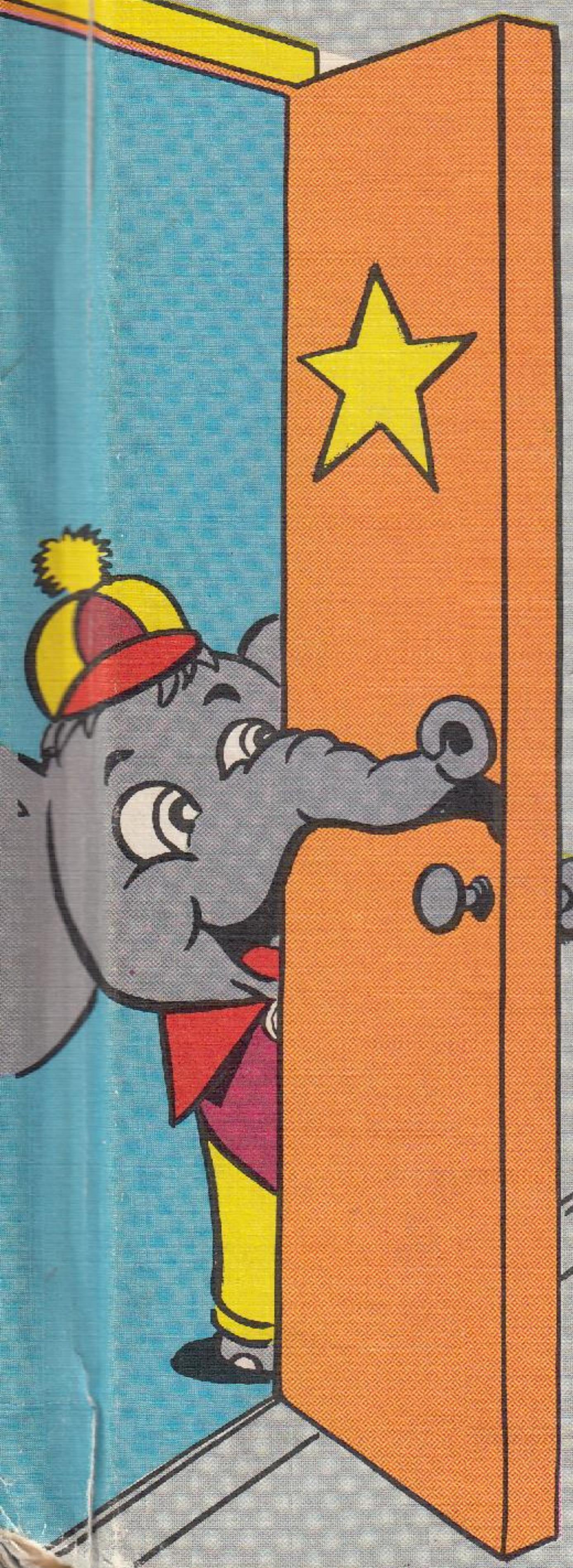


The **EXERCISE** **EXPERT**



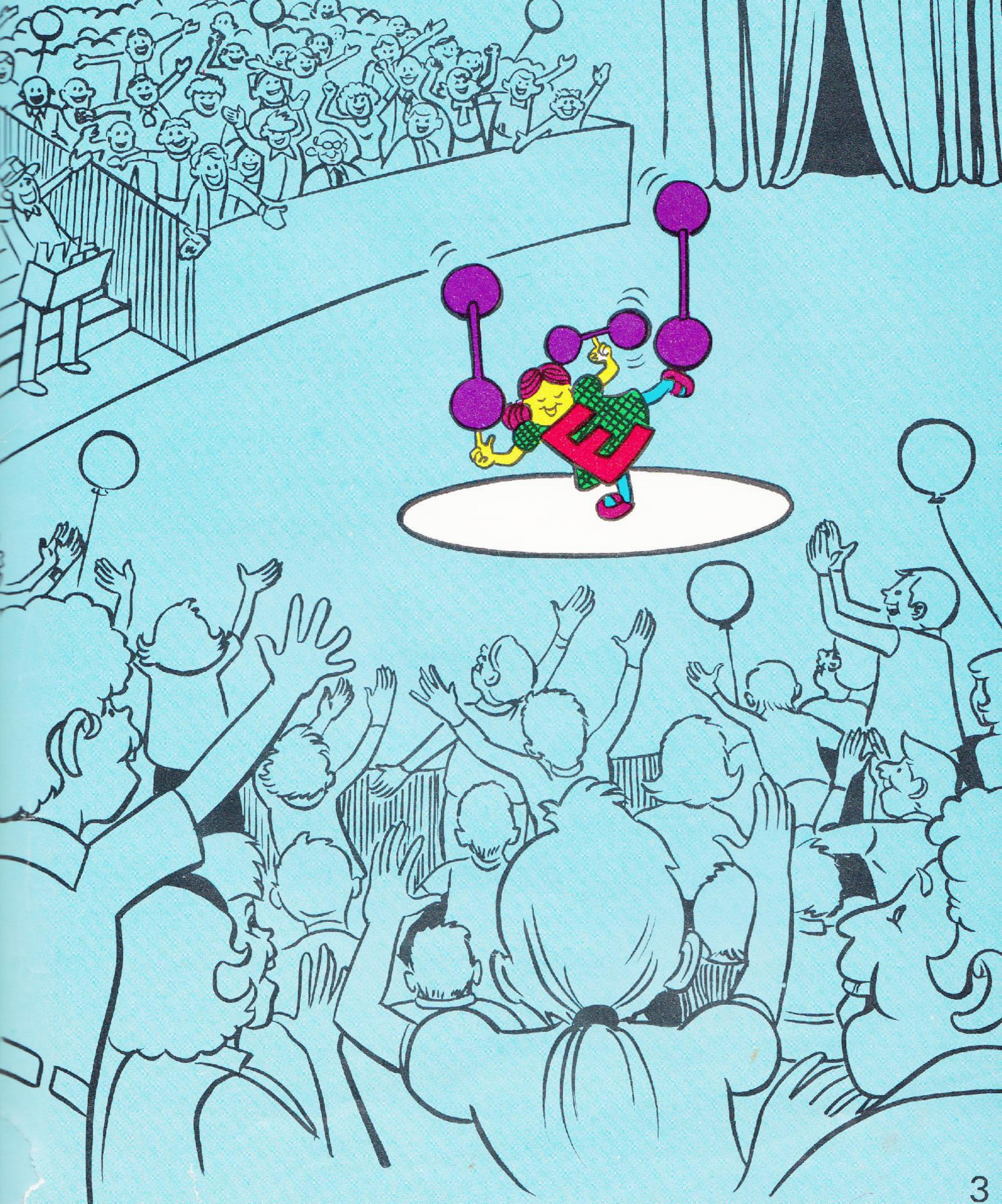
ELAYNE REISS
RITA FRIEDMAN



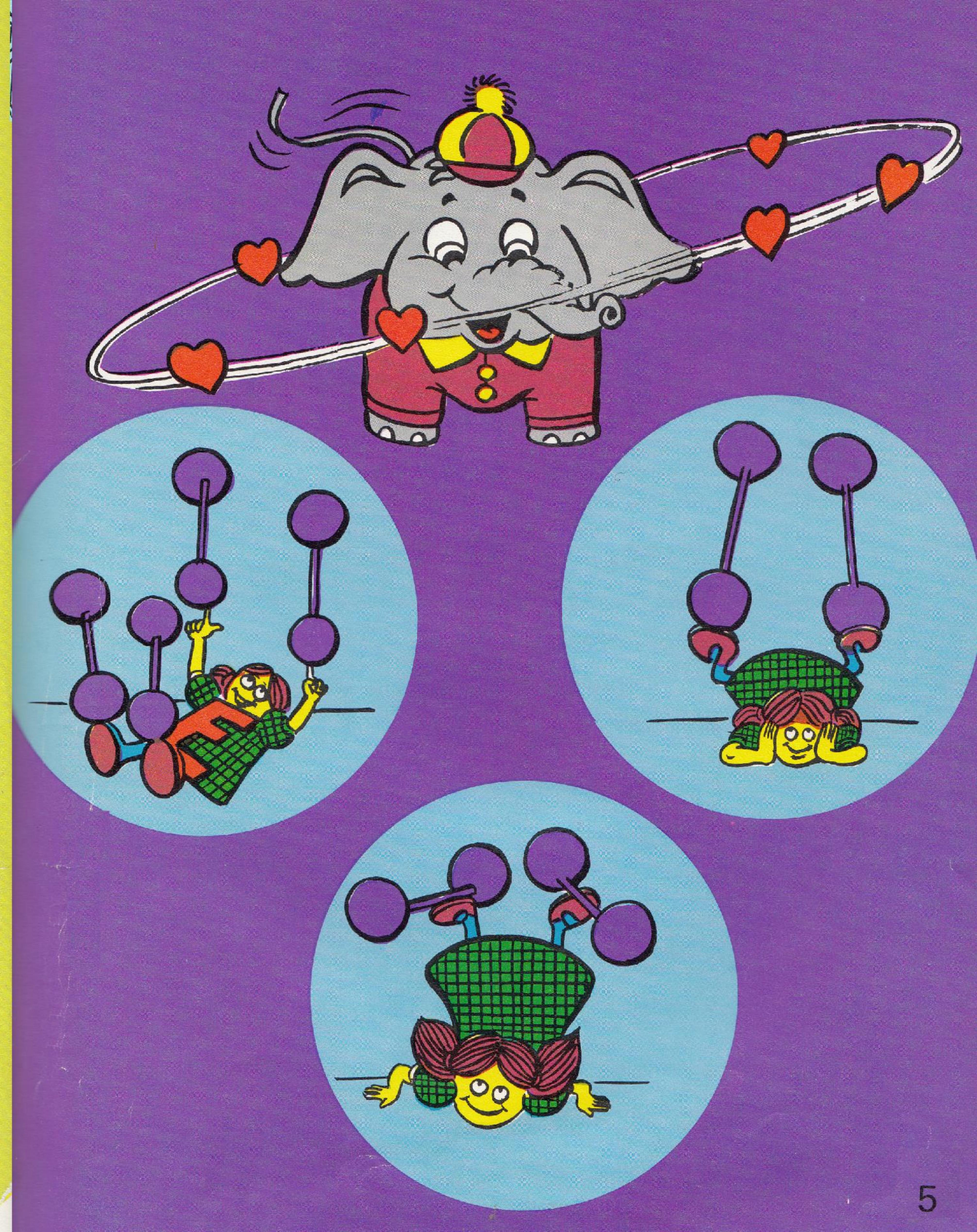
Today is an exciting day in Letter People Land.
Everyone is going to the circus.
Miss E has been invited to perform.

The circus tent is filled with people.
People come from everywhere to see Miss E exercise.
Miss E is the exercise expert.

She ex-er-cis-es
and she ex-er-cis-es.
Everyone cheers.



The baby elephants do not see Miss E exercise.
It is their nap time.
The loud cheering awakens, baby elephant, Egbert.
He rushes to see who is performing.
He sees Miss E exercising.
"How wonderful she is!" exclaims Egbert, as he watches .
"She is truly the exercise expert."
Egbert's heart goes pit-a-pat.
His tail goes swish swash.



Egbert sees Miss E leave the circus tent.

“I will go to Miss E’s house and surprise her,” he decides.

No one will miss me at the circus.

“I never have anything to do.”

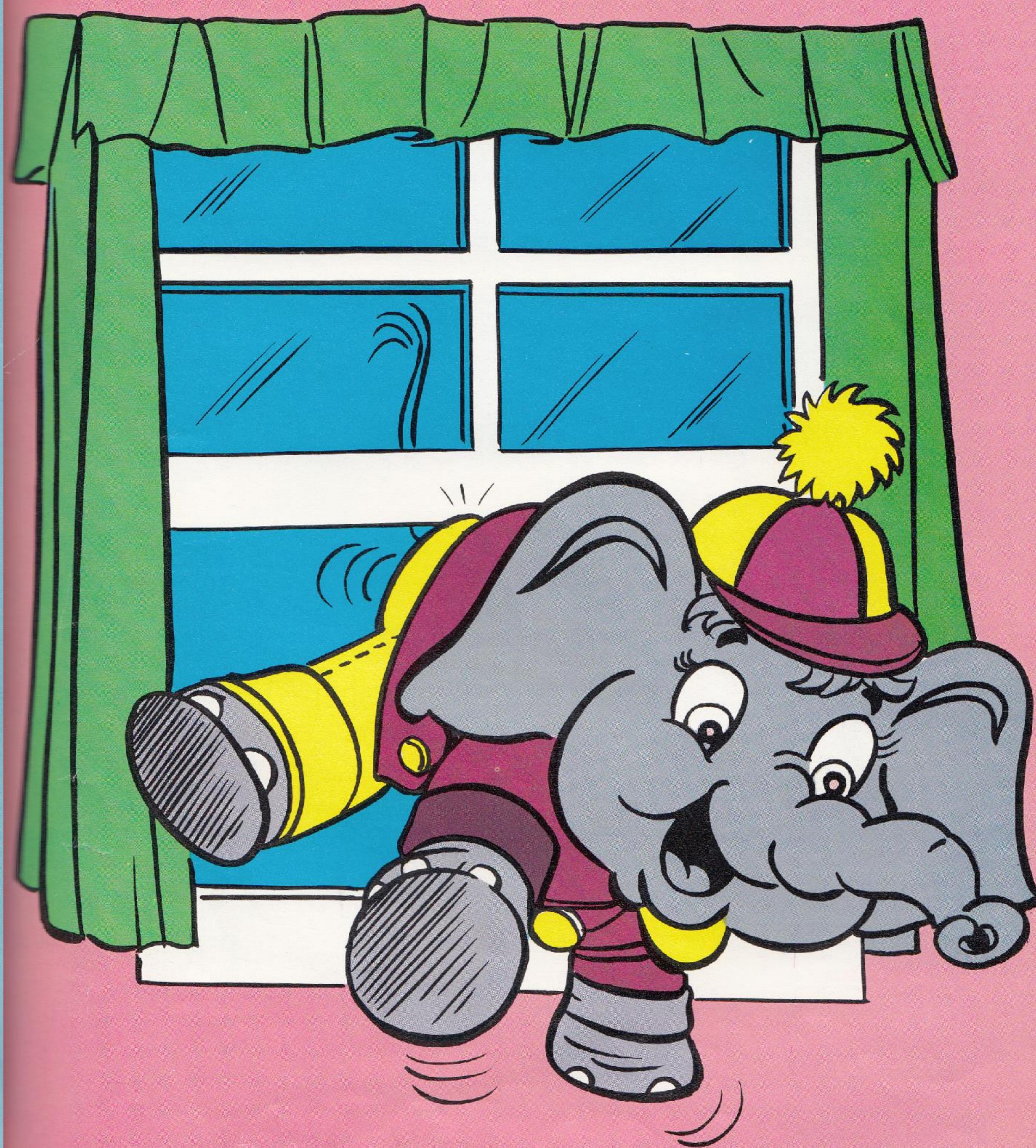
Egbert runs away.

He looks everywhere for Miss E’s house.

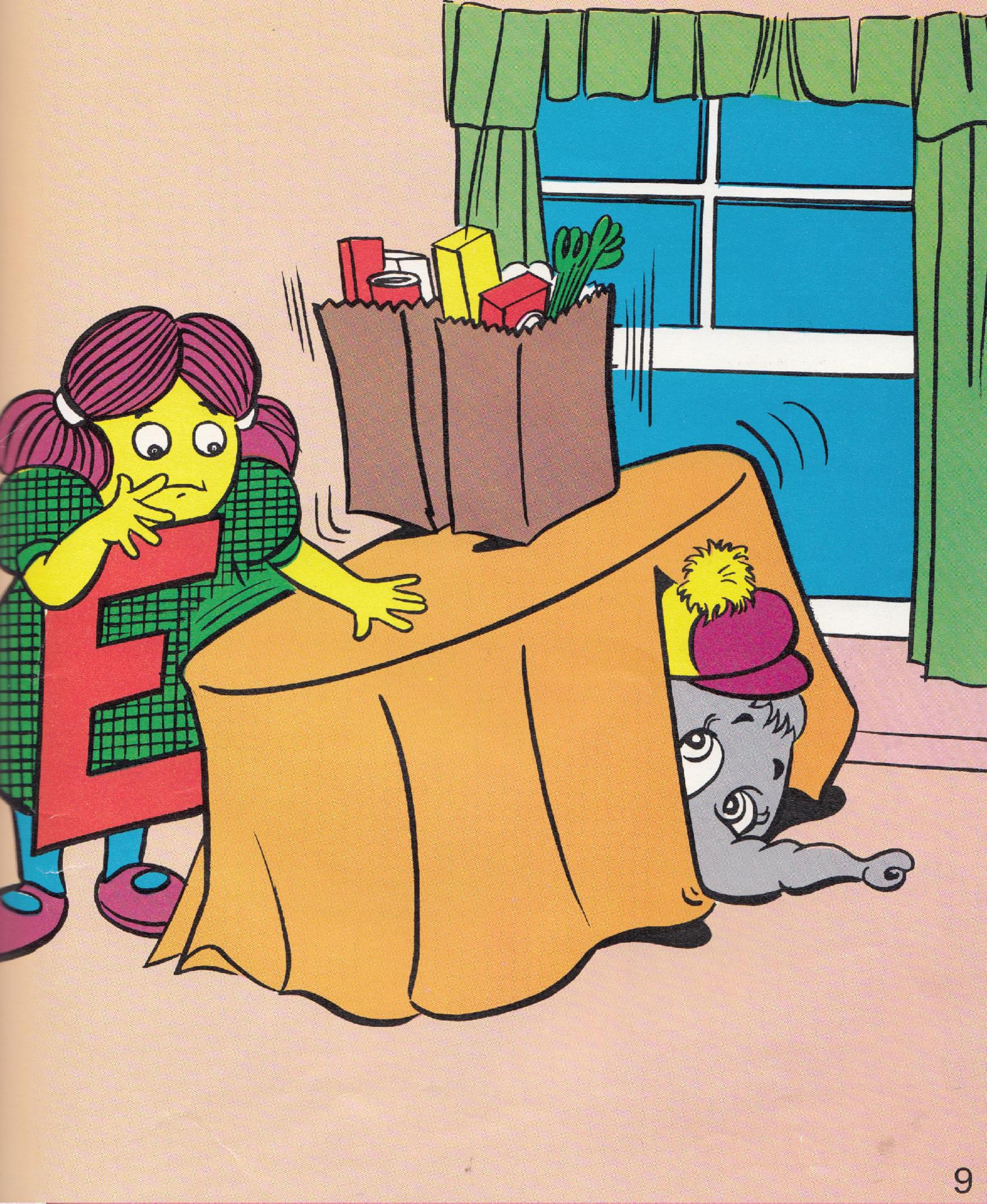
At last, he finds it.

He climbs in through an open window.

He waits for Miss E.



Egbert hears Miss E opening her front door.
Suddenly, he is very bashful.
"I'll surprise Miss E later.
I'll hide under the table," thinks Egbert.
Miss E is carrying many packages.
She puts them on the table.
"What's wrong?" wonders Miss E.
"This table rocks.
Oh well, I can fix it.
I'll get a hammer from my workshop."



As soon as Miss E leaves, Egbert scrambles out from under the table.

"I don't want to be hit with a hammer," he cries.

"Where shall I hide?"

Egbert looks all around the room.

He has an idea.

He grabs a lampshade and plops it on his head.

Egbert stands on his hind legs.

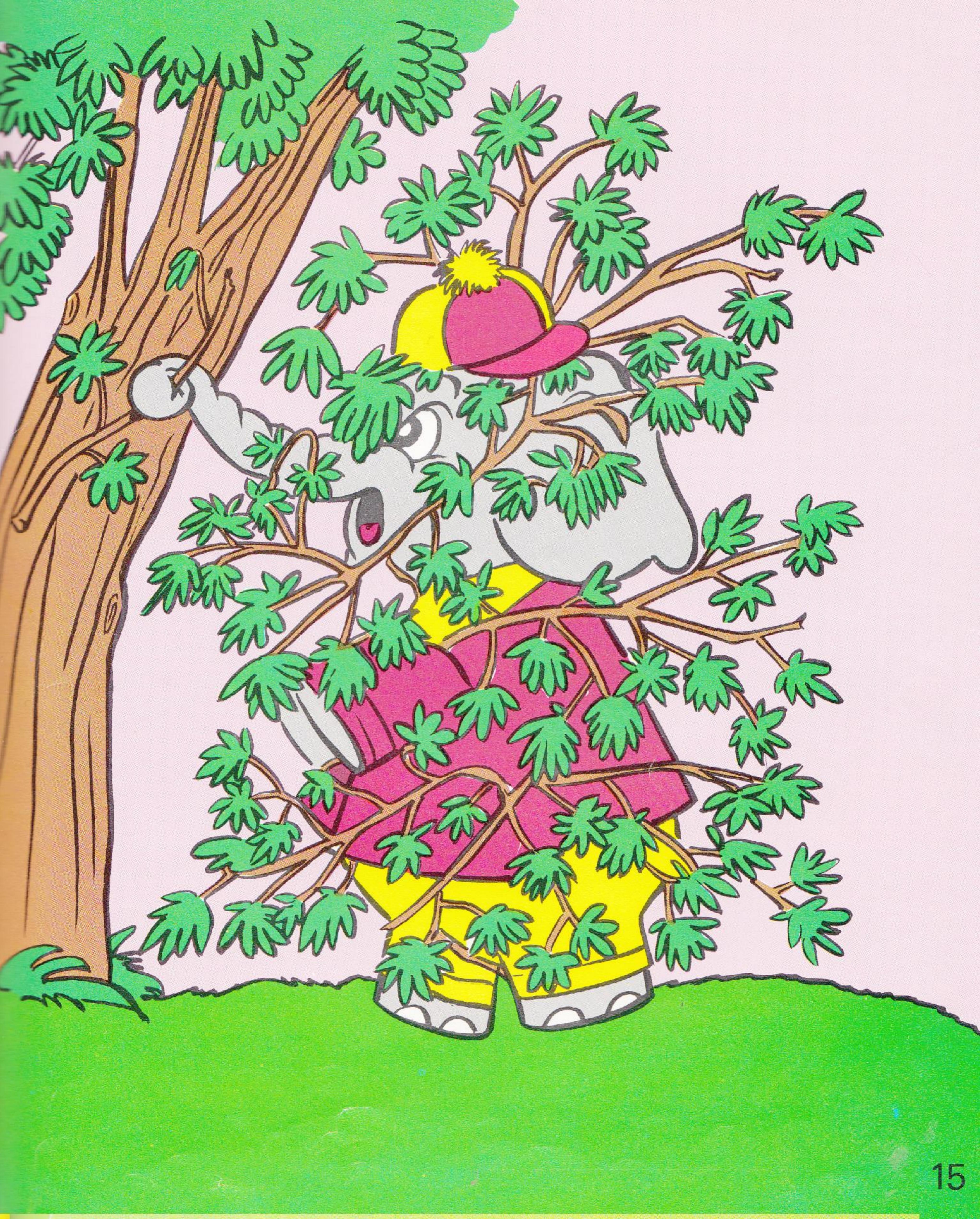
He pretends to be a lamp.



Miss E returns carrying a hammer.
She touches the table.
"What has happened?" she wonders.
"The table doesn't rock anymore."
Suddenly, Miss E sees Egbert.
"What a wonderful lamp!" she exclaims.
"It must be a present from the circus."
Miss E picks up Egbert's tail.
"This lamp cord is much too short," she says,
examining Egbert's tail.
"Oh, well! I can fix it."
Miss E goes to her workshop.



“I don’t want Miss E to fix my tail,” cries Egbert.
He yanks the lampshade off his head.
Poor Egbert slips and tumbles out the window.
Suddenly, he hears Miss E coming back into the room.
“Where can I hide now?” sighs Egbert.
He sees a tree with large leaves.
Quickly, he pulls branches off the tree.
He covers himself with the branches.



Miss E hears noise.
She hurries outside.
Miss E sees the strange looking tree.
She touches it.
Egbert doesn't dare to move.
Suddenly, the leaves tickle his trunk.
He sneezes a loud elephant sneeze.
The branches blow away.
The strange looking tree disappears.



Miss E sees a baby elephant.
"Who are you?" she asks.
"Are you a magician who can make a tree disappear?"
Egbert is too bashful to talk.
"I think I've seen you before," continues Miss E.
"Now I remember.
You look exactly like a wonderful lamp I had.
It disappeared too."



Egbert is so excited.

“Miss E likes me!” he thinks happily.

“I am, Egbert, from the circus,” he tells her.

“Why aren’t you at the circus?” asks Miss E.

“No one needs me,” answers Egbert sadly.

“Please let me live with you.

I can entertain you.

First, I’ll be a table.

Then, I’ll be a lamp.

After that, I’ll be a tree.”



Miss E likes Egbert but an elephant can not live in a house.
She brings him back to the circus.
The next day, Egbert runs away again.
This time, he finds Miss E's house quickly.
Egbert peeks in the open window.
Miss E is exercising.
Egbert slides his trunk through the window.
Miss E is so startled she drops her exercise barbell.
It lands on Egbert's trunk.



“Yowee!” screams Egbert.

He loses his balance and tumbles in through the window.

Miss E helps him to his feet.

“I don’t mean to cause problems,” sighs Egbert.

“It’s not your fault,” says Miss E kindly.

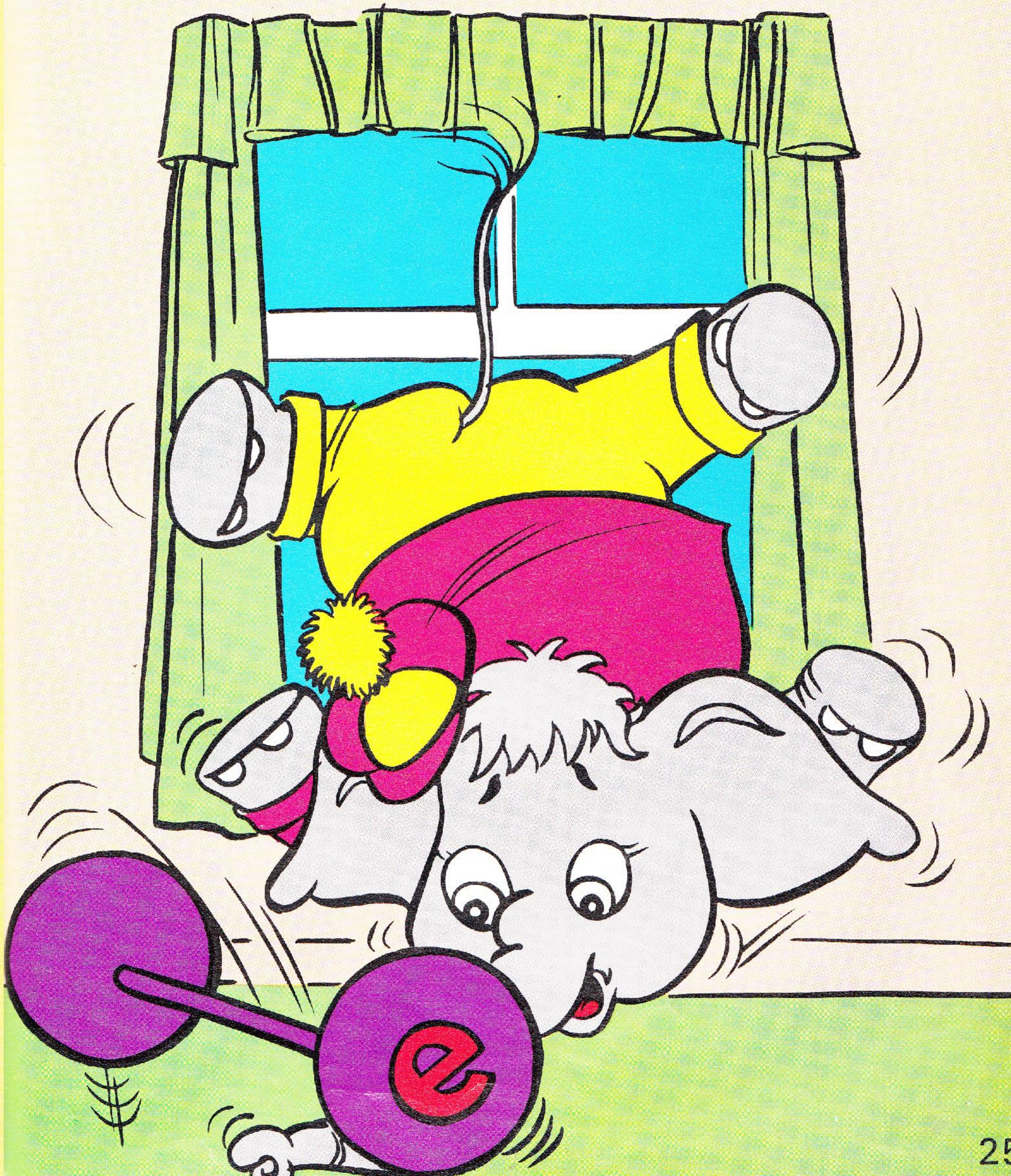
“An elephant does not belong in a house.

An elephant belongs in a circus.”

“No one needs me at the circus.

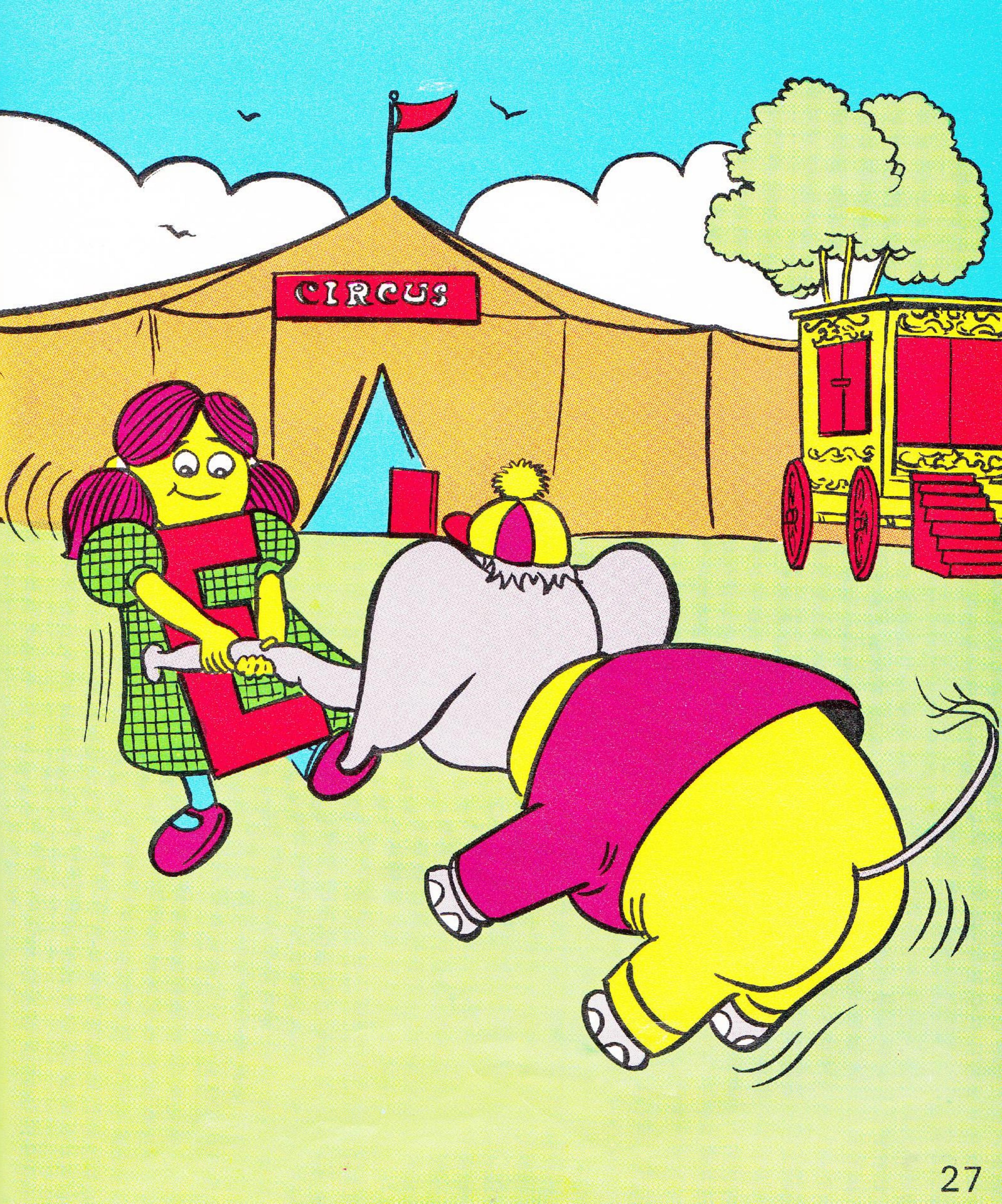
I never have anything to do,” sighs Egbert.

“You must wait until you are older,” explains Miss E.

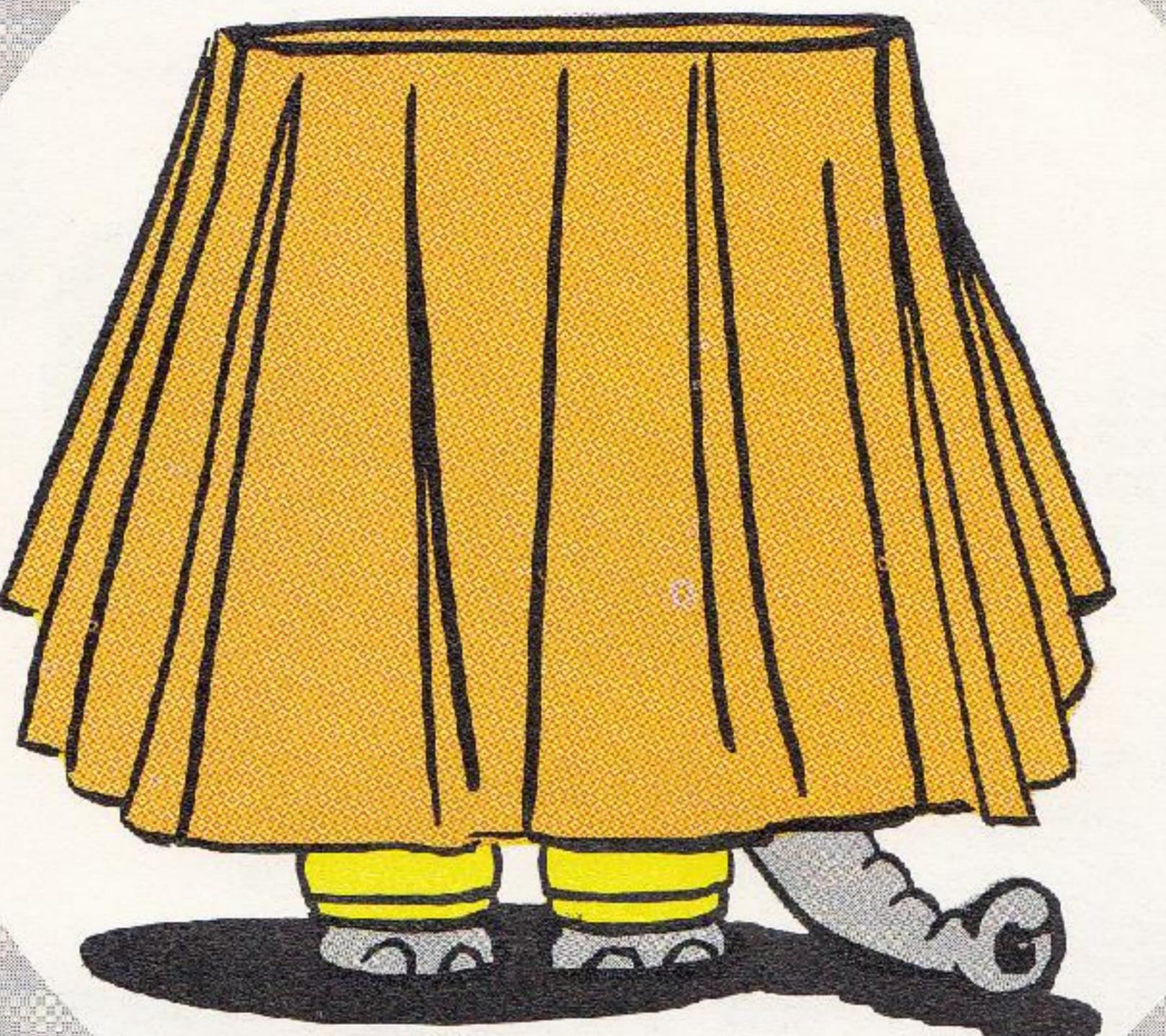


Miss E brings Egbert back to the circus again.
He will not stay.
Day after day, Egbert runs away.
Day after day, Miss E pulls him back to the circus.
Finally, Miss E has a plan.
She explains it to the circus owner.

The plan works!



Egbert never runs away anymore.
Now he is a famous circus entertainer.
He hides under a tablecloth and pretends to be a table.
He wears a lampshade and pretends to be a lamp.
He covers himself with branches and pretends to be a tree.
Everyone comes to see Egbert entertain.





Exercise Expert...



Soon, Egbert is the star of the circus.
He has his own dressing room.
There is only one thing in it... a picture of
Miss E

After all, Egbert is an elephant.
An elephant, never forgets.